



Milwaukee County

Judiciary, Safety & General Services Committee

Supervisor Willie Johnson, Jr., Chairman

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COMMITTEE STATEMENT ON PAYMENT TO ESTATE OF LUCINDA ANZCAK

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Supervisor Willie Johnson, Jr., Chairman of the County Board's Judiciary, Safety and General Services Committee, released the following statement, on behalf of the committee, regarding a payment to the Estate of Lucinda Anzcak:

"Today's action was purely a business decision on behalf of the taxpayers of Milwaukee County. With this payment, we will avoid a long and costly trial. Based on written communications we have received from the Medical Examiner, we have no reason to believe that starvation was the cause of Ms. Anzcak's death. The fact remains that media reports concluding that Ms. Anzcak died of starvation are incorrect, and the County assumes no liability for her death."

"While it is true that Ms. Anzcak experienced weight loss while at the Behavioral Health Division (BHD), she did not starve to death and, in fact, the Medical Examiner's cause of death was explicitly stated as complications of a pulmonary embolism due to a deep leg vein thrombosis (i.e., a blood clot that likely migrated to her lungs). The parties agree that this occurrence was an unpredictable, catastrophic event which was unrelated to her mental health care needs and not reflective of any neglect by BHD. The Medical Examiner's report does not say that starvation contributed to her death.

"As stated in the settlement and agreed to by both parties, 'Ms. Anzcak elicited a great deal of compassion from BHD staff who cared for her. She was an individual with a great many endearing qualities who, when well, helped many others on their respective recovery paths. The fact that she passed away from an unpredictable medical illness just as she was beginning to heal psychiatrically made this a very painful death for all staff involved in her care.'"

Final settlement is pending approval by the Milwaukee County Board and County Executive.

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